

Chapter 2 - Aesthetic Objectives - Final Draft

Aesthetic Objectives

The guiding principle behind the **Design Review Guidelines** is to enhance the quality of life for all residents and visitors to the city by preserving the community's character and desirable aesthetic features. To ensure that this character is preserved, it is necessary to protect significant features from destruction and ensure that new projects in the city do not detract from the identifiable character of the community. New construction projects and substantial renovation projects should respect the scale, materials, massing, and setbacks of neighboring buildings and the overall streetscape. New construction should preserve and enhance the natural features present on the project site and along the street. Signs and awnings should be designed to enhance the property's visual image and complement the street's existing conditions.

Architectural Preservation Districts

Design review within **Architectural Preservation Districts** is intended to protect buildings from inappropriate renovations, to create an atmosphere for compatible future growth, to prevent the intrusion of adverse environmental influences, and to assure that new buildings and uses will be in keeping with the character of the various older neighborhoods within the **Architectural Preservation Districts**. In particular, they intend to protect the integrity of the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area and avoid the confusion and dilution caused by the construction of buildings within a quarter-mile of the Historic Area boundaries, which replicate the eighteenth-century buildings in the Historic Area.

New construction should be compatible with other buildings in the district and should not imitate existing buildings. Well-designed buildings that respect the scale and character of existing buildings but in a modern idiom can be successful infill projects in older neighborhoods. Additionally, new construction projects should be designed for the specific siting within the City of Williamsburg. They should avoid designs that exemplify a company's corporate design image without regard for the project setting.

Corridor Protection Districts

Design review within the **Corridor Protection Districts** is intended to protect and enhance the aesthetics of the **Architectural Preservation Districts**, including the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area, by ensuring that the city's major access routes are developed and maintained in a harmonious and compatible manner. The intent is to encourage the improvement of these major entrance corridors' visual character, prevent the intrusion of adverse environmental influences, and create an atmosphere for compatible future growth. New construction designs must be of the highest quality in design and materials and reflect the unique character of Williamsburg.